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AURICULAR ACUPRESSURE FOR BREASTFEEDING: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Boram Lee¹, Chan-Young Kwon², Sun Haeng Lee³, Hye Jin Shin¹, Jihong Lee¹ and Gyu Tae Chang¹

¹Gangdong Kyung Hee University Hospital, South Korea

²Yanggu Public Health Center, South Korea

Background & Aim: There have been some studies about the efficacy of auricular acupressure in relieving many clinical issues during pregnancy and during period of lactation. This study aimed to summarize and critically evaluate the evidence on auricular acupressure for breastfeeding.

Methods: We searched 10 databases published up to May 15, 2017. Randomized controlled trials for evaluating the efficacy and safety of auricular acupressure for breastfeeding were included. Risk of bias was assessed using the Cochrane risk of bias tool. Data analysis was conducted using RevMan software (version 5.3).

Results: 31 randomized controlled trials were included. Because of the high risk of bias observed in the included studies and the diversity of the auricular acupressure methods, meta-analysis

was not performed. Auricular acupressure as a complementary therapy to routine postpartum care had no consistent effect in increasing the volume of milk production and serum prolactin level and in facilitating the initiation of milk secretion. Auricular acupressure as an alternative therapy may be effective in increasing serum prolactin level and facilitating the onset of milk secretion, however, the evidence is lacking. There were no serious adverse events with the use of auricular acupressure. The methodological quality of the included studies was generally low.

Conclusions: We could not determine the general efficacy and safety of auricular acupressure, although some studies showed positive results. Due to low methodological quality of the included studies and heterogeneity among them, further research using large-scale, rigorous study designs should be conducted in future.

qhfk9357@naver.com